

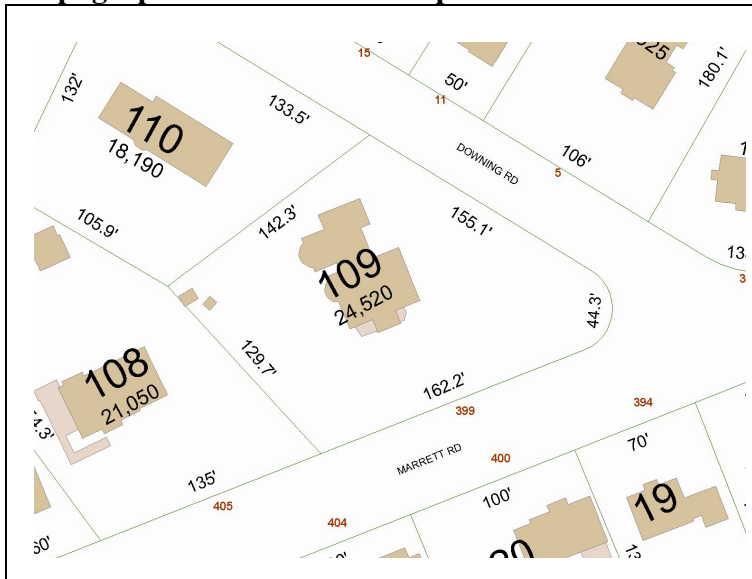
# FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

## Photograph



## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf

**Organization:** Lexington Historical Commission

**Date (month / year):** January 2010

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

33/109

Boston  
North

1601

**Town:** Lexington

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*)

**Address:** 399 Marrett Road

**Historic Name:** Edward S. Payson House

**Uses:** Present: residential

Original: residential

**Date of Construction:** 1907

**Source:** *Minute-man*, Aug. 31, 1907

**Style/Form:** Colonial Revival

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: vinyl siding

Roof: asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
sheds

**Major Alterations (with dates):**

Date? – siding, new windows, rear addition

**Condition:** fair (due to siding)

**Moved:** no | x | yes | | **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acreage:** 0.57 acre

**Setting:** mixed residential along busy state road

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

LEXINGTON

399 Marrett Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

1601

\_\_\_\_ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.  
*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

Located at the corner of Downing Road and Marrett Road, 399 Marrett Road is a 2 ½-story, 3 x 2-bay, side-gabled structure designed in a Colonial Revival style and dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The house is set on a mortared fieldstone foundation and there is a stone patio in front. The house is presently sheathed in vinyl siding. Sheathed in asphalt shingles, the roof has clipped gable (jerkinhead) ends and projecting eaves with exposed rafter tails. The center entrance is fronted by a single-bay wide entrance porch supported by two pairs of Doric columns with a dentil molding along the porch roof. The center entrance contains a glass-and-panel door and is flanked by sidelights and half round columns. Resting on the porch roof is a three-sided bay, above which there is a hip-roofed dormer punctuating the front roof slope. There is a rounded, two-story projection on the west end and a rectangular oriel window on the east end. The windows contain modern 1/1 sash. Behind the main house is a two-story, hip-roofed ell with similar exposed rafters. An addition has recently been constructed on the west side of the ell.

**HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

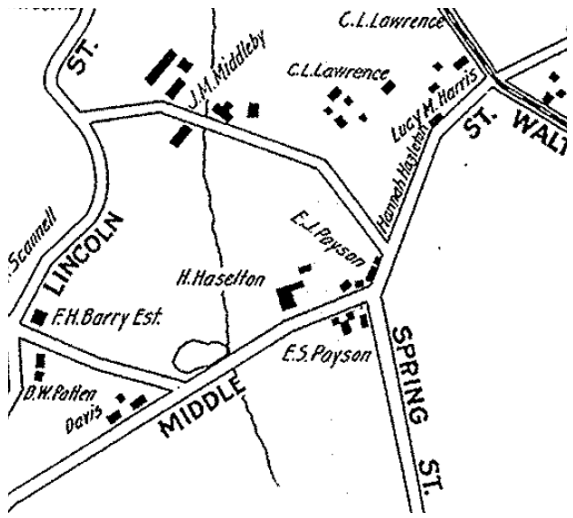
*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

This house (earlier known as 403 Marrett Road) was constructed in the 1907 for piano manufacturer Edward S. Payson and his wife Carrie and the couple lived here until they died (Worthen: 111). In 1890 Payson, president of the Emerson Piano Company in Boston bought the property at 410 Marrett Road and 419 Marrett Road and called it Grassland Stock Farm. He bred thoroughbred horses including Goldust-Morgan horses and Shetland ponies and built a huge barn for them at the southwest corner of Marrett Road and Spring Street. In 1895 he was assessed for 26 horses. The house at 410 Marrett Road was occupied by the farm's stableman and his family. The couple also maintained a residence on Huntington Avenue in Boston. In 1922 the farm itself was acquired by Neil McIntosh who divided it up into small house lots. The lot containing 410 Marrett Road was sold in 1923. In 1930 Edward and Caroline were still living in what is now 399 Marrett Road - he was then 87 years old and she was 83. By 1932 Mrs. Payson was living here alone.

According to local historian Edwin Worthen, Mr. Payson was a leading figure in the efforts to make Esperanto the universal language. He was also had a remarkable bass voice and at one time sang in grand opera. Mrs. Payson was a schoolteacher in Boston and also sang opera (Worthen: 111). According to Mrs. Payson's will, the house passed to the Amanda Caroline Payson Educational Fund for Girls. In 1935 the trustees sold it to Robert N.K. Svedeman. Later owners included Stephen & Beverly Dreher (before 1968) and Charles & Cynthia Calvin (1968-1991).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Hudson, Charles. *History of the Town of Lexington*. Cambridge: The Riverside Press Co., 1913, vol. 2, p. 520.  
Kollen, Richard et al. *Images of America: Lexington*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2001, p. 16.  
Lexington Directories, various years.  
*Lexington Minute-man*, July 25, 1890; 8/31/1907  
U.S. Census, various years.  
Worthen, Edwin B. *Tracing the Past in Lexington, Massachusetts*. New York: Vantage Press, 1998.  
1906 map



Detail, 1906 map